# LEVEL news

Great Lakes - St. Lawrence River Water Levels

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PDF Format

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Water Levels for the Great Lakes and Montreal Harbour - *a monthly bulletin from Canadian Hydrographic Service*

About the monthly Water Level bulletin

March Precipitation Over the Great Lakes

As a percentage of the long-term March average:

Great Lakes Basin 78%

Lake Erie (including Lake St. Clair) 71%

Lake Superior 61%

Lakes Michigan-Huron 83%

**Low Water Level Conditions Continue, But**

## All Lakes Appear to Have Started their Annual Seasonal Rise

After experiencing seasonal declines as much as twice their average amounts this past fall and winter, it appears that the Great Lakes are into their annual seasonal rise for 2003.

After remaining fairly stable during the first half of the month, daily levels on lakes Erie and Ontario increased 14 and 25 cm, respectively, during the last half of March. These increases were large enough to cause the monthly mean water levels on these two lakes to increase about 5 cm from February to March. Although monthly levels declined from February to March on lakes Superior, Michigan-Huron and St. Clair upward trends in their daily water levels during the last week of March suggest they have also started their annual seasonal rise.

As indicated in the water level information table, levels on all lakes remain well below their long-term average and lower than they were at the same time last year. Although still several centimetres above their period-of-record low levels, the monthly mean levels recorded this year on lakes Michigan-Huron, Erie and Ontario during February and March were the lowest they have been since 1965.

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## Great Lakes Water Level Information

| | March Monthly Mean Level | | Beginning of April Level | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Lake | Compared to Monthly Average (1918-2002) | Compared to One Year Ago | Compared to Beginning-of-Month Average (1918-2002) | Compared to One Year Ago |
| Superior | 22 cm below | 8 cm below | 19 cm below | 3 cm below |
| Michigan-Huron | 61 cm below | 26 cm below | 59 cm below | 23 cm below |
| St. Clair | 38 cm below | 27 cm below | 33 cm below | 18 cm below |
| Erie | 28 cm below | 24 cm below | 26 cm below | 22 cm below |

Lake Ontario 92%

| Ontario | 32 cm below | 44 cm below | 21 cm below | 29 cm below |
|---|---|---|---|---|

**Note**: These figures are preliminary.

March Outflows From the Great Lakes

As a percentage of the long-term March average:

Lake Superior 88%

Lake Erie 91%

Lake Huron 89%

Lake Ontario 92%

**Note**: These figures are preliminary.

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Summary information for "LEVEL*news*"

## Water Level Outlook

Water levels are expected to continue to rise throughout the Great Lakes system during April. Unless very wet conditions are experienced over the next six months, water levels on each of the Great Lakes, except Lake Ontario, are expected to remain well below average and lower than they were during 2002. Water levels will likely be similar to, or possibly lower than, those experienced during 2001, a time when low lake levels affected recreational boating interests. No new record lows are expected on the lakes at this time, however, near-record low levels on lakes Michigan-Huron and St. Clair are possible if dry conditions persist. If wet conditions return to the basin, Lake Ontario could recover to near average levels sometime this summer.

Be sure to check the Monthly Water Levels Bulletin each month for the latest 6-month water level forecast for each lake.

## Ice Boom Removal Delayed past April 1

Ice cover conditions on the eastern end of Lake Erie and the amount of ice below Niagara Falls delayed the removal of the Lake Erie-Niagara River Ice Boom beyond April 1st.

Representatives of the International Niagara Board of Control will continue to monitor the ice conditions to determine when boom opening can commence. A media advisory will be issued by the Board to inform the public when this year's boom opening begins.

## LEVELnews also available on the Internet

An electronic version of LEVELnews is posted on the Internet around the 8th or 9th of each month. You can read the LEVELnews text directly on your computer's screen or you can open, view and print an Adobe Portable Document Format (or PDF) version. When printed, the PDF version has virtually the same look and feel as the one distributed by mail.

Current and past editions of LEVELnews.

Once you've read LEVELnews, be sure to review to the latest Monthly Water Level Bulletin. The Bulletin can be accessed by using its link provided on the LEVELnews website.

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URL: http://www.on.ec.gc.ca/water/level-news/ln200304_e.html